(e) During the year 2000-2001 Speed Post traffic and revenue will grow further.

(f) The Department of Posts has taken the following steps to tone- up the functioning of Speed Post services further:—

(a) Delivery through dedicated staff.

(b) Mechanisation of delivery.

(c) Free pick-up services from the customers premises.

(d) Computerisation of booking and delivery.

(e) Introduction of Track and Trace system.

(f) Monitoring of quality.

Grace period to Telephone Service Operators

†5365. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL: Will the Minister of COMMUNICA- TIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have given 180 days grace period for achieving the targets related to telephones in rural areas to telephone service operators;

(b) if so, the target fixed and when those targets were fixed and by when these targets were decided to be achieved; and

(c) the assurance Government have received with regard to the achievement of the target in the next 180 days?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) Letters have been issued to private licensees for achieving the targets committed for first 3 years of licence, by the date of completion of such 3 years period from the effective date of their licence agreement.

(b) The requisite information is given in the enclosed statement (*See* below).

(c) So far Licensees have not given any definite indication of time- frame for achievement of their committed targets.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

Status of Provision of Village Public Telephones (VPTs) by Private Licensees

Licensee & licensed Circle	Effective date of licence	Committed targets* for VPTs in first three years (As per obligations under licence agreement)		
		1 Year	II Year	III Year
1. M/s Tata Tele-services (Andhra Pradesh)	30.9.1997	9635 (by 30.9.98)	(All villages were to be covered in first year i.e. by 30.9.1998)	
2. M/s Reliance Telecom, (Gujarat)	-do-	8635 (by 30.9.98)	(All villages were to be covered in first year i.e. by 30.9.1998)	
3. M/s Essar Commvision (Punjab)	-do-	5442 (by 30.9.98)	(All villages were to be covered in first year i.e. by 30.9.1998)	
4. M/s Hughes Ispat (Maharashtra)	-do-	4000 (by 30.9.98)	21760 (by 30.9.99)	No village was to be left uncovered by 30.9.99
5. M/Bharti Telenet (Madhya Pradesh	-do-	5500 (by 30.9.98)	5500 (by 30.9.99)	5500 (by 30.9.2000)
6. M/s Shyam Telelink (Rajasthan	4.3.1998	7439 (by 4.3.99)	10629 (by 4.3.2000)	13766 (by 4.3.2001)

* Translated into absolute terms based on bid/tender documents keeping in view the committed target for Direct Exchange Lines (DELs) and the figure for number of uncovered villages indicated in the tender.